

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 1-2 and 4-5 are currently being amended.

This amendment changes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-8 are now pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

Title

The title has been amended to be descriptive as requested by the examiner.

Specification

The Office Action on page 2 indicated that “In the specification, the numerous references to the claims . . . are objectionable.” This objection is not understood. The present specification does not appear to refer to any specific claims. Applicants respectfully request clarification of this objection.

Drawings

The Office Action indicated that the drawings were objected to because Figures 1-4 should be labeled “Prior Art” or “Related Art”. Figures 1-4 have been amended to label Figures 1-4 as “PRIOR ART”, thus overcoming the objection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Specifically the Office Action indicated that the term “said cover members” is inconsistent with the term “a covering member” recited earlier in the claims. The claims have been amended to replace “said covering members” with “said covering member”, thus overcoming the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Amendments to the Drawings:

The drawing sheets attached in connection with the above-identified application containing Figures 1-5 are being presented as a new formal drawing sheet or sheets to be substituted for the previously submitted drawing sheet or sheets. The drawing figures 1-4 have been amended. Appended to this amendment is an annotated copy of the previous drawing sheet which has been marked to show changes presented in the replacement sheet of the drawing.

The specific changes which have been made to Figure 1-4 are to label the figures as "PRIOR ART".

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,713,069 to Kato ("Kato"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Independent claims 1 and 4 are directed to a fixing device which includes a covering member having a heat accumulating member (claim 1), or heat generating member (claim 4), effectively secured thereto, wherein the covering member is disposed so as to surround the heating roller starting on an end of an effective heat generating area of said heating roller. Kato fails to disclose at least the covering member arranged as recited in claims 1 or 4.

Kato discloses a fixing roller 10 and pressure roller 11 (Fig. 1, col. 3, lines 35-42). Kato also discloses a preheating member 30 adjacent the fixing roller (Figs. 1 and 2, col. 5, lines 7-11).

Kato, however, fails to disclose a covering member where the covering member is disposed so as to surround a heating roller starting on an end of an effective heat generating area of the heating roller, as required by claims 1 and 4. The Office Action equates the fixing roller 10 and preheating member 30 with the heating roller and covering member, respectively, as claimed. The preheating member 30 of Kato, however, does not surround the fixing roller 10 (heating roller) starting on an effective heat generating area of the fixing roller. Instead the preheating member 30 is arranged along the entire length of the fixing roller. Thus, Kato fails to suggest the covering member arranged as recited in claims 1 and 4.

Moreover, it would not have been obvious to modify the Kato preheating member 30 so that it covers the fixing roller 10 starting at an effective heat generating area of the fixing roller. Kato discloses that circular arc-shaped portion 31 of the preheating member 30 is arranged to cover the fixing roller 10 "as widely as possible" (col. 5, lines 38-43). Thus, Kato teaches away from shortening the preheating member so that it surrounds the fixing roller starting on an effective heat generating area of the fixing roller.

Further, Kato does not address the problem solved by the presently claimed fixing device of claims 1 and 4. The fixing device of claims 1 and 4 addresses the problem where a lower temperature occurs at the ends of the heating roller as compared to the central portion.

Thus, in claims 1 and 4, the covering member is arranged only starting at the heat generating area of the fixing roller where there is a need to raise the temperature, not over the central portion. Kato, by contrast, neither recognizes this problem, nor suggests a way to address the problem.

The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as their respective independent claims as well as for further patentable features recited therein.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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HEAT ACCUMULATING STRUCTURE ON THE END OF A HEATING ROLLER IN A FIXING DEVICE
EMPLOYING AN INDUCTION HEATING COIL SYSTEM (As Amended)

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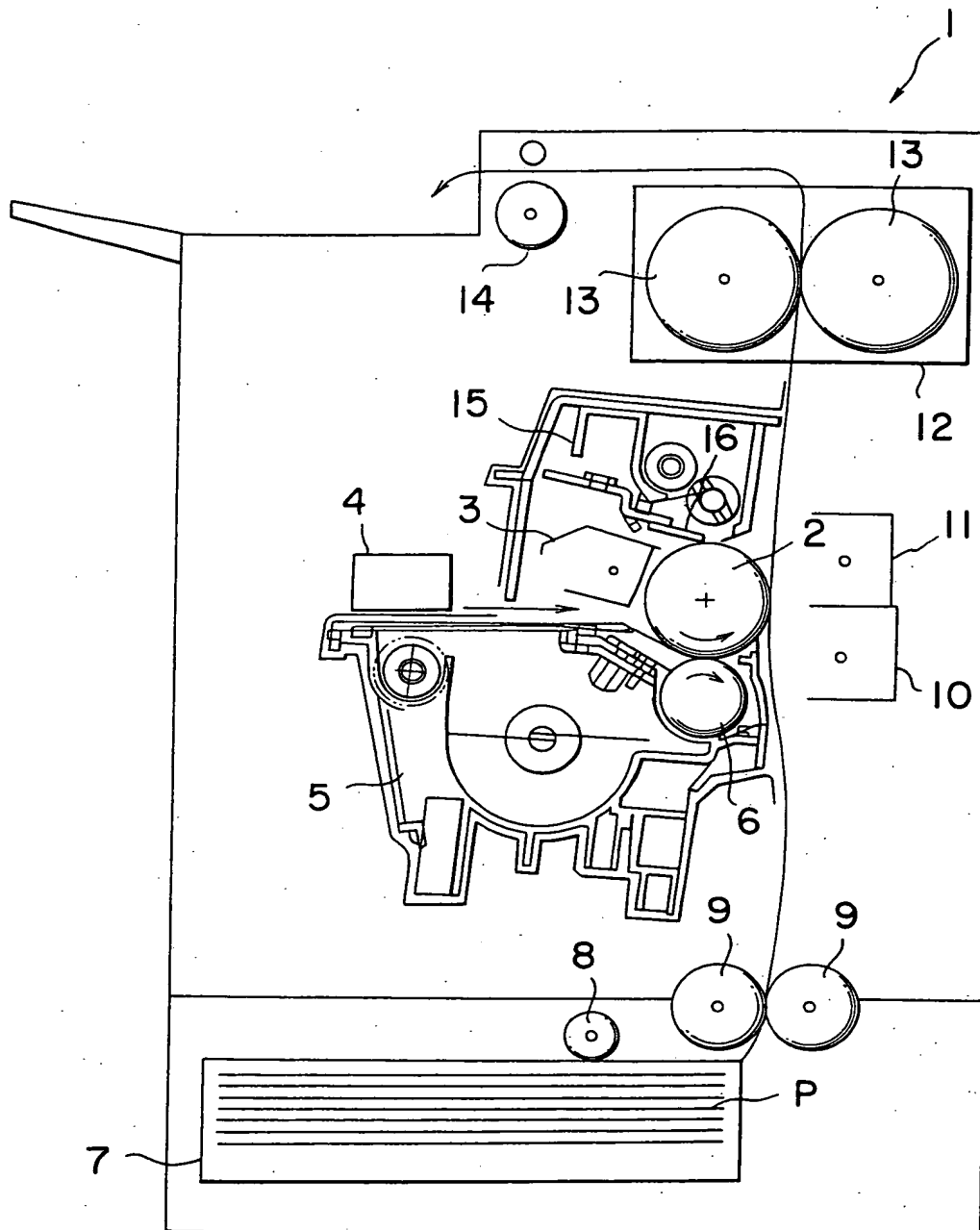


FIG. 1
PRIOR ART

HEAT ACCUMULATING STRUCTURE ON THE END OF A HEATING ROLLER IN A FIXING DEVICE
EMPLOYING AN INDUCTION HEATING COIL SYSTEM (As Amended)

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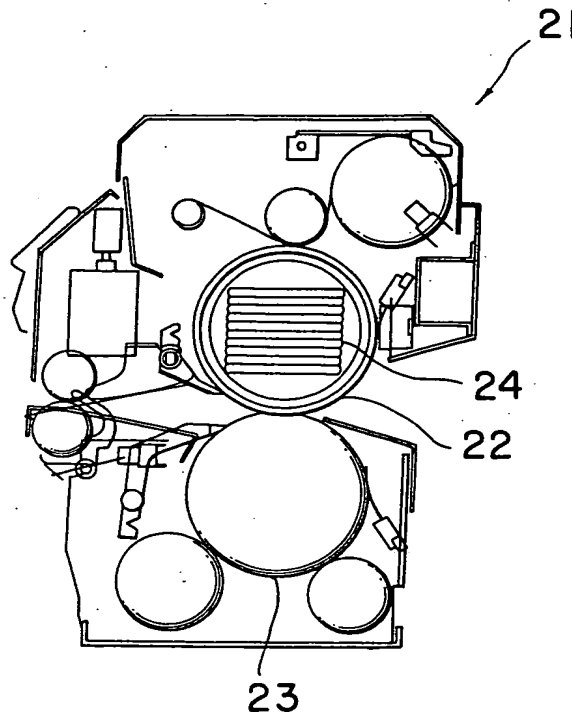


FIG. 2
PRIOR ART

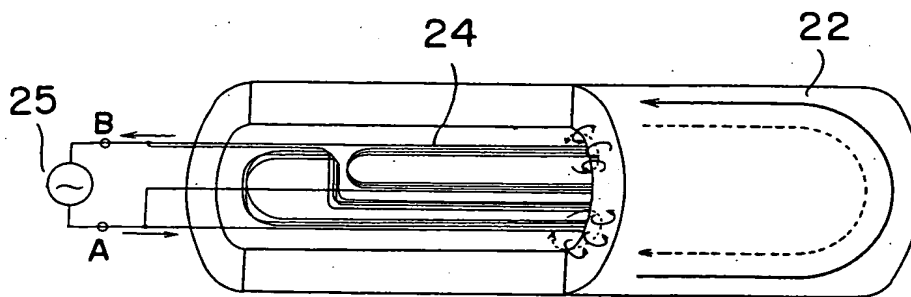


FIG. 3
PRIOR ART

HEAT ACCUMULATING STRUCTURE ON THE END OF A HEATING ROLLER IN A FIXING DEVICE
EMPLOYING AN INDUCTION HEATING COIL SYSTEM (As Amended)

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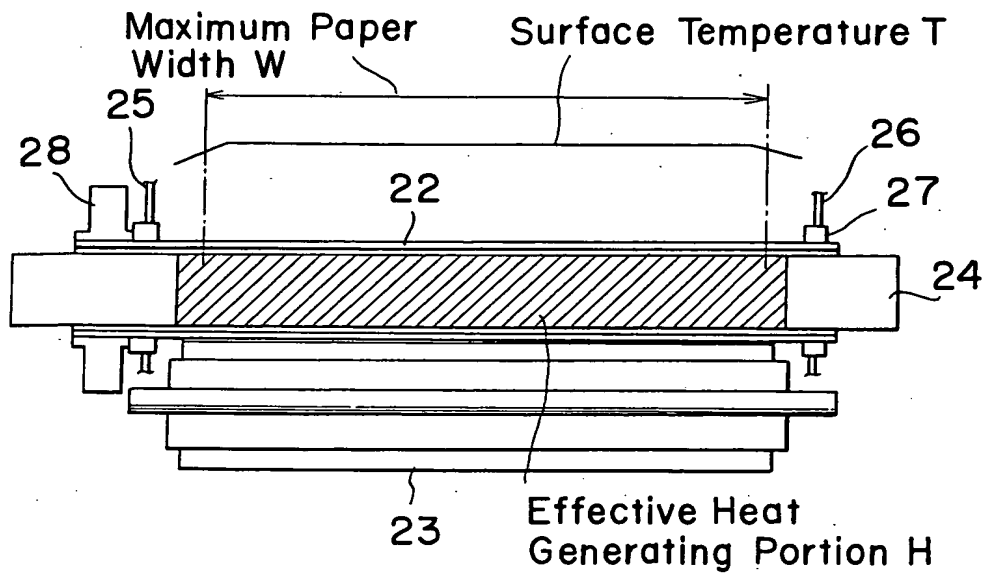


FIG. 4
PRIOR ART

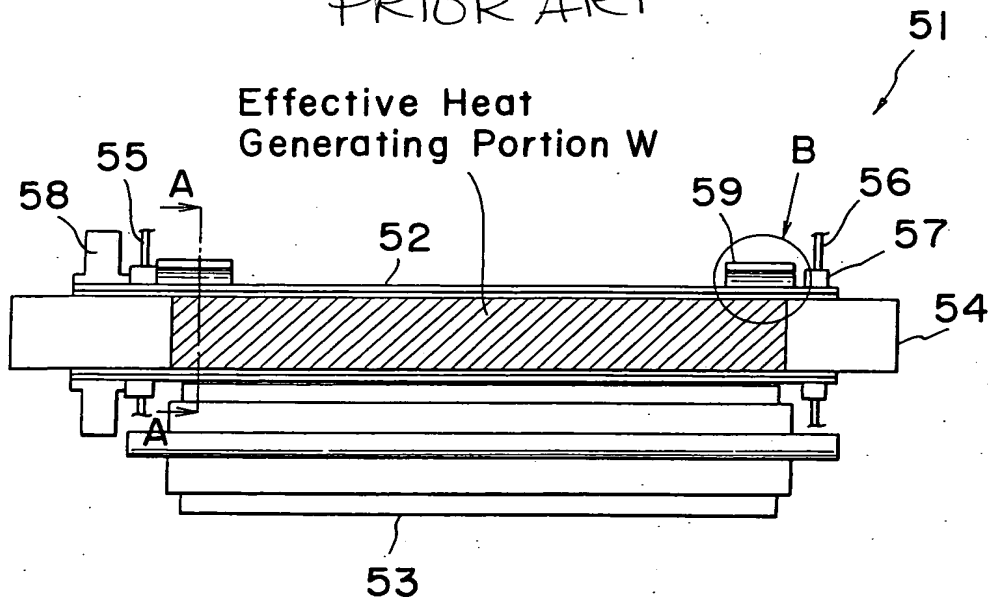


FIG. 5